

PATENT APPLICATION

**METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR HARDWARE
FORWARDING OF LAN FRAMES OVER ATM NETWORKS**

ABSTRACT

5

A multiported LAN switch comprised of legacy local area network ports and ATM ports. Each ATM port comprising a hardware forwarding engine for bridging LAN frames from the LAN ports to the ATM port. The hardware forwarding engine converts layer 2 protocols between the dissimilar ports expediently, without requiring intervention by a microprocessor. A substantial performance gain is attained compared to microprocessor controlled format converters. Both LAN emulation and virtual LANs are supported.

10